

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 08078 031839Z
ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 HA-02 SP-02 CIAE-00
NSAE-00 INR-05 IO-06 /043 W
-----009864 040356Z /13

R 031810Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2497
INFO AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 8078

LIMDIS

FROM VATICAN OFFICE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, CZ, VT
SUBJECT: RECENT VATICAN -CZECHOSLOVAKIAN TALKS

REF: ROME 7290

1. SUMMARY. VATICAN OFFICIAL HAS TOLD US THAT APRIL 20-27
VATICAN-CZECHOSLOVAKIAN TALKS DID NOT PRODUCE ANY FORWARD
MOVEMENT ON NORMALIZATION OF CHURCH-STATE RELATIONS. THERE
WAS NO COMMUNIQUE FOLLOWING ROUND OF TALKS AND NO DECISION
ON WHEN TALKS WOULD BE RESUMED. END SUMMARY

2. THE VATICAN-GOC TALKS, WHICH WERE HELD IN PRAGUE APRIL
20-27, DID NOT PRODUCE ANY FORWARD MOVEMENT ON ANY OF THE
MAJOR CHURCH-STATE ISSUES. WHILE THE WHOLE RANGE OF OUTSTANDING
CHURCH-STATE ISSUES WERE REVIEWED, VATICAN NEGOTIATORS POGGI
AND BUKOVSKY CAME AWAY CONVINCED THAT GOC DELEGATION WAS NOT
REALLY PREPARED TO DEAL CONSTRUCTIVELY WITH SUCH SUBSTANTIVE
ISSUES AS THE NOMINATION OF BISHOPS, RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
AND SEMINARIES, AND THE STATUS OF RELIGIOUS ORDERS. THEY
ARE RECOMMENDING THAT NEXT ROUND OF TALKS BE HELD AT A
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HIGHER LEVEL.

3. VATICAN OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT GOC DELEGATION WAS ONLY
INTERESTED IN RESOLVING SUPERFICIAL ISSUES, SUCH AS THE UP-
GRADING OF TWO BISHOPS TO THE RANK OF ARCHBISHOP, AND DID NOT
WISH TO COME TO TERMS WITH THE ISSUES OF PRIMARY CONCERN TO THE
VATICAN.

4. ACCORDING TO VATICAN OFFICIALS, OF THE FOUR-MAN GOC DELEGATION, CINOLDER, REPRESENTING THE PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE, (AND LINKED TO BILAC), APPEARED TO BE RUNNING THE SHOW ON THE GOC SIDE, WHILE HRUZA, REPRESENTING THE GOVERNMENT SIDE, INCREASINGLY RELEGATED TO A "FIGUREHEAD" ROLE.

5. COMMENT: THE TREPIDATION WITH WHICH VATICAN NEGOTIATORS APPROACHED THE TALKS (SEE REFTTEL) SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN JUSTIFIED. OUR VATICAN CONTACTS NOW BELIEVE THAT THE PRESENT FRAMEWORK OF THE TALKS IS NOT LIKELY TO BREAK THE PREVALING DEADLOCK AND THAT FORUM OF TALKS OUGHT TO BE UPGRADED. IT APPEARS THAT VATICAN FOREIGN MINISTER CASAROLI MAY ATTEMPT TO DO JUST THIS DURING THE FORTHCOMING UN SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT, WHICH BEGINS ON MAY 23, WHEN HE HOPES TO SEE HUZAK OR CHNOUPEK IN NEW YORK.GARDNER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, CHURCH STATE RELATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 may 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ROME08078
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780189-0905
Format: TEL
From: ROME
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780597/aaaadeuv.tel
Line Count: 78
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 902d23a5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: 78 ROME 7290
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2803536
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RECENT VATICAN -CZECHOSLOVAKIAN TALKS
TAGS: PGOV, CZ, VT
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/902d23a5-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014